

This application is a continuation-in-part of USSN 09/780,512, filed February 12, 2001.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to methods for improving the therapeutic response of human patients with major depression, particularly those carrying the gene for apolipoprotein E4.

Background of the Invention

Psychiatric diseases generally provide a unique set of complications for clinicians, patients, and care givers. Major depression, for instance, is a major health problem and poses a tremendous financial burden on society due to lost self-support of individuals suffering from depression. Such individuals are often simply unable to function in everyday life situations, in part because of feelings of extreme hopelessness and worthlessness. There is also a serious risk of suicide among such individuals. The various forms of depression are defined and are separately diagnosed according to criteria given in handbooks for psychiatry, for example in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 4th edition (DSM-IV) published by the American Psychiatric Association, Washington, D.C. (1994). The diagnostic criteria for major depression are well known to those skilled in the art, and comprise the criteria set forth, for example, at DSM-IV 296.2 and 296.3. Major depression, defined in more detail below, is also known as major depressive disorder and is estimated to affect between 5 to 10% of the human population.